



A.G. on Ag
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California Agriculture Updates ~ April 2008

Safety of LBAM Program Affirmed

Yesterday, three state agencies charged with the protection of our environment and public health released a [joint study](#) concluding that they found no link between reported health symptoms and aerial pheromone applications last fall to fight the light brown apple moth (LBAM). While no link was found, we want to assure citizens that we are taking their concerns very seriously. Moving forward, the agencies (Cal/EPS's [Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment](#), [Department of Pesticide Regulation](#) and [Department of Public Health](#)) are preparing an outreach plan aimed at the medical community to assure greater surveillance of possible health effects.

I hope this oversight of health concerns by our state's doctors and scientists will help ease the minds of those concerned about the light brown apple moth eradication program. As the [California Association of Professional Scientists](#) asserted, "[this report] underscores the importance of a sound scientific evaluation in what has turned into a controversial but important aerial spraying program."

In a letter to my office, Dr. Frank Sances, director of [Pacific Ag Research](#)—a nonprofit alternative agriculture advocacy group working with organic and sustainable growers—wrote in support of the use of pheromones. He states, "I know of no cases where off-target adverse effects have occurred with this technique, and I firmly believe you are managing an environmentally safe but technologically advanced program with a high probability of success." He emphasizes that this "opinion is shared by the vast majority of the scientific community familiar with the pest, the toxicology of pheromones, and commercial options available for eradication of this pest."



Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, CDFA Secretary A.G. Kawamura and USDA Secretary Ed Schafer enjoy Agriculture Day '08 at the State Capitol, Sacramento, California, on March 25. (Photo J. Eddy/CDFA)

I took an oath to protect California's best assets—our people, environment and agricultural commodities. In that spirit, I know we are obligated to rid our state and country of this destructive pest while also protecting our citizens. In light of this latest health study, I ask that each and every Californian look to credible sources of information to learn more about our program. The [CDFA Web site](#) is a good place to start.

On March 25, I was joined in celebration of [California Ag Day](#) by Gov. Schwarzenegger and [USDA Secretary Ed Schafer](#) and Food Network celebrity chef, Guy Fieri. CDFA, in partnership with the [California Women for Agriculture](#), worked to transform the

state Capitol into a festival of food, flowers, fiber and fun. At least 3,000 people attended, lining up for a taste of California. More than 35 exhibits showcased this state's agricultural diversity—from barbecued pork to crisp rice cakes to honey-vanilla ice cream. Secretary Schafer noted, "You don't have to be the secretary of agriculture very long to realize that this state's contributions to our nation are magnificent."

While Secretary Schafer was in California for Ag Day, he also used his time here to talk about the threat of the [light brown apple moth](#). "The only responsible course of action is to stop the progress of this species before it does serious damage to California's agricultural economy and spreads far beyond the areas where it is today." He reaffirmed the USDA's resolve to eradicate this invasive pest using the safest and most effective means possible. To see a video presentation of his comments, go to CDFA's [Invasives Web site](#).

Clearly, we have much to celebrate. Our [state's agricultural bounty](#) continues to help feed the nation and the world. I want to thank the many people and organizations who helped to create another very successful Ag Day. On my executive staff, I particularly want to recognize Jonnalee Henderson and Kelly Hoppin. They went above and beyond what was asked of them to ensure its success, and we all enjoyed a wonderful day as a result.

I look forward next week to welcoming delegates to the Border Governors Agriculture Work Table meeting and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture Work Group on Trade Harmonization ([Tri-Accord](#)). These are two very important opportunities to discuss agricultural issues and continue the longstanding cooperation between Canada, Mexico, and the United States in tri-lateral trade for agriculture.

As always, thank you for your support. Feel free to contact my office with any questions or concerns.

A.G. Kawamura

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